

Objections

The specification was objected to as including a various minor errors. The specification has been amended based on the Examiner's helpful comments. Accordingly, the applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw this objection.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-2 and 6-15 stand rejected as being anticipated by both U.S. Patent No. 3,181,124 (referred to as "the Hammel patent") and U.S. Patent No. 5,003,472 (referred to as "the Perrill patent"). The applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw these grounds of rejection in view of the following.

Before addressing the patentable features of the claimed invention, both the Hammel and Perrill patents are introduced.

The Hammel patent discusses a relatively obsolete electro-mechanical cash register system in which a number of stations (20, 22, 24 ...) are cycled through, in accordance with a timing sequence, for processing by a central transaction system (26). (See, e.g., column 3, line 29-column 4, line 52.) The central transaction system performs computations such as totaling prices, updating inventory, and other simple adding and counting operations. (See, e.g., column 4, lines 34-41.) The stations can display or printout information received back from the

central transaction system. (See, e.g., column 3, lines 33-37.) The hardware-based system discussed in the Hammel patent apparently requires a cyclic processing of the stations, performed in accordance with timing and sequencing hardware. Indeed, even the memory used by the central transaction system is cyclic. (See, e.g., column 26, lines 68-75.)

The Hammel patent does not teach or suggest a POS system with voice input, nor does it teach or suggest a POS system in which programs for the maintenance of POS system are provided only at the host. Indeed, as stated in the Hammel patent, the computations of the central transaction system is apparently limited to simple operations of addition or counting. (See, e.g., column 4, lines 34-41.) That is, in the Hammel patent, there is no technical requirement about application programs and/or maintenance programs of a POS system.

The Perrill patent discusses an order entry system for use in restaurants. The system includes (i) wireless terminals, each having a display, bar code menu items on a template, and a bar code reader, (ii) cash drawer terminals, each having a printer, a display, a bar code reader, a bar code template, a cash drawer, keys, and a credit card reader, and (iii) a cooks line terminal including multiple displays and printers.

The Perrill patent does not teach or suggest storing maintenance program for the wireless terminals solely at the host. Indeed, changes to the menu are presumably effected by changing the template with bar codes

provided on the wireless terminal. Furthermore, the wireless terminals are used for entering orders, while separate cash drawer terminals are used for consummating sales. Indeed, the Perrill patent does not disclose application programs and/or maintenance programs of a POS system, which are/is stored in a host unit and which are/is updated only on the host side.

Independent claims 1, 10 and 13 are not anticipated by the Hammel patent, or the Perrill patent because these patents do not disclose that maintenance programs for the POS terminal units are stored solely at the host unit. Regarding the Hammel patent, as stated above, the computations of the central transaction system are apparently limited to simple operations of addition or counting. Regarding the Perrill patent, as stated above, changes to the menu are presumably effected by changing the template with bar codes provided on the wireless terminal. Accordingly, in the Perrill patent, the wireless terminals are not maintained solely by programs stored at the host.

In view of the foregoing, claims 1, 10 and 13 are not anticipated by either the Hammel patent, or the Perrill patent. Since claims 6-8 each depend from claim 1, they are similarly not anticipated by these patents.

Since claims 2, 11, and 12 have been canceled, the rejection of these claims is rendered moot.

Independent claim 9 is not anticipated by the Hammel patent, or the Perrill patent because these patents do not disclose updating execution programs only at the

host. Since the Hammel patent is hardware based, presumably updates are not contemplated, or require extensive changes to the hardware throughout the system. Regarding the Perrill patent, as stated above, changes to the menu are presumably effected by changing the template with bar codes provided on the wireless terminal. In view of the foregoing, claim 9 is not anticipated by these patents.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 3-5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over the Perrill patent. The applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw this ground of rejection in view of the following.

Claim 3 is not rendered obvious by the Perrill patent because one skilled in the art would not have been motivated to modify the Perrill patent as proposed by the Examiner. The Examiner contends that (i) compression is well known, (ii) screen scripting languages for controlling remote terminals are also well known, and (iii) it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use compressed transmission, together with a screen control or scripting language, to achieve a rapid transmission rate and a desirable data display on the remote terminal. However, compression has some inherent drawbacks such as a higher potential to corrupt data, cost and time for compression and decompression, the loss of some detail. In the Perrill patent, there is no apparent need for a rapid transmission rate to offset the drawbacks of compression.

Accordingly, one skilled in the art would not have been motivated to modify the Perrill patent as proposed by the Examiner. Therefore, claim 3 is not rendered obvious by the Perrill patent and art purported to be well known by the Examiner.

To summarize, the claimed invention has many advantages not afforded by the Hammel patent or Perrill patent. More specifically, since no application program is provided in any terminal, it is impossible to greatly reduce terminal management and installation costs. Any trouble can be dealt with at a central location, and it is therefore possible to reduce the expenditures for dealing with problems at various terminals. Since the terminal construction is simplified, it is possible to reduce the machine cost and improve the reliability. Since data is provided at a centralized server, not only data can be readily backed up, but also the data processing can be executed as real-time processing. The terminals can be started in a minimum time. Thus, at the time of non-use of the terminal, the power supply can be turned off, which is desired from the energy serving standpoint. It is unnecessary to develop any software for data transfer with respect to the centralized server and software for master-related updating data production, and it is thus possible to reduce software-related cost. The terminal does not require any master updating time, and it is thus possible to minimize POS downtime.

New claims

New claims 16-19 depend from claims 1, 9, 10 and 13, respectively, and further recite that the POS terminal includes voice input. An example of this feature is described on page 7, lines 18-21 of the specification. This feature further distinguishes the present invention over the Hammel and Perrill patents.

New claims 20-23 depend from claims 1, 9, 10 and 13, respectively, and further recite that the POS terminal includes display and printing means. An example of these features is described on page 8, lines 19-23 of the specification.

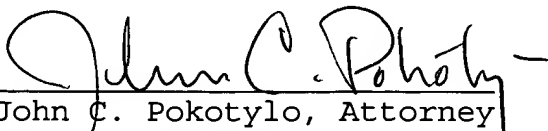
New independent claim 24 is supported by the description on page 9, line 10 through page 11, line 3 of the specification.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the applicant respectfully submits that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, the applicants request that the Examiner pass this application to issue.

Respectfully submitted,


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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited on **June 5, 2001** with the United States Postal Service as first class mail, with sufficient postage, in an envelope addressed to the Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231.


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(AMENDED) A POS system comprising a host unit and a plurality of POS terminal units connected thereto via a predetermined communication line for data transfer/receipt between each POS terminal unit and the host unit, wherein:

maintenance programs for the POS system are stored in the host unit;

execution programs of the POS system are stored in the host unit; and

each POS terminal unit is not provided with any POS system execution program, and has at least a transmission data generating function and a communication function for data exchange with the host unit.

9. (AMENDED) A POS system comprising a host unit and a plurality of POS terminal units connected thereto via a predetermined communication line for data transfer/receipt between each POS terminal unit and the host unit, wherein:

execution programs of the POS system are stored in the host unit;

each POS terminal unit is not provided with any POS system execution program, and has at least a transmission data generating function and a communication function for data exchange with the host unit; and

[a purchase amount settling function in each POS terminal unit is executed via the host unit] execution programs of the POS system are updated only at the host.

10. (AMENDED) A POS system comprising a host unit and a plurality of different POS units connected via

predetermined communication line thereto and operable in POS systems for different kinds of services, wherein:

POS system execution programs for the different kinds of services are collectively stored in the host unit; [and]

each POS unit is not provided with any corresponding system execution program, and has at least a transmission data generating function and a communication function for data exchange with the host unit; and

a maintenance system for the maintenance of the plurality of the POS systems for the different kinds of services is provided only in the host unit.

13. (AMENDED) A system for effecting point of sale functions, the system comprising:

- a) a host, the host including means for storing all programs related to execution of the point of sale system, and means for storing all programs related to maintaining the point of sale system;
- b) at least two point of sale terminals, each of the at least two point of sale terminals having
 - i) means for generating transmission data, and
 - ii) means for exchanging data with the host; and
- c) communication means coupled with the host and each of the at least two point of sale terminals, and facilitating communications between the host and each of the at least two point of sale terminals.